Mesa Police Department

CRIME PREVENTION NEWS

Partnering with our community to prevent and reduce crime

HAPPY HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS!

TAKE YOUR KEYS
REMOVE YOUR VALUABLES
LOCK YOUR VEHICLE

CALL MESA POLICE: (480) 644-2211
CRIME PREVENTION INFO: www.mesaaz.gov/police

Consider installing a camera system to cover front & back yards and entryways.

Keep newly purchased items and presents out of sight!

Leave inside lights on when you go out in the evening, so it appears someone is home.

Watch for packages being delivered and bring them in as quickly as possible.

Secure lawn decorations if possible to avoid theft.

Ask a trusted neighbor to collect packages for you if you can't be home.

When shopping, keep all money, keys, and valuables close to you—Front pocket instead of back pocket.

Before leaving the check stand, confirm you have your wallet, credit cards, and keys.

When shopping with a purse, keep the strap across your body, not just your shoulder. Keep one hand on it at all times.

Before going shopping, take all valuables out of your vehicle and lock them in your home.

Before going in a store, take your keys, remove your valuables (purse, cell phone), and LOCK your vehicle!

Have a trusted friend or neighbor watch your home if you will be gone for a few days.

Never leave children alone in a vehicle while you go in a store.

When turning on inside lights at night, close the curtains and remember to also turn on the porch light.

GIFTS OF CRIME PREVENTION!

After the presents are unwrapped, cut up the boxes and put them in the trash, not on the curb whole.

Stay Alert and Aware of your Surroundings!

To: *YOU!*
From: Your Mesa Police Crime Prevention Officers!

Before You Put a Bow on Them, REGISTER All New Bikes with the Mesa Police Department! Online at: https://www.mesaaz.gov/residents/police/programs-services-forms/bicycle-registration

Seniors—Protect Yourself From Medicare Billing Scams!

Federal officials announced charges last fall against 36 people after a nationwide probe centered on false billings for medically unnecessary genetic tests. After a sweeping crackdown, bad actors were blamed for $2.1 billion in Medicare fraud, and federal officials are urging older Americans to refuse offers of "free" genetic testing for cancer. Equally important, they urged people to safeguard their Medicare Identification numbers so they do not fall into the hands of fraudsters.

The crackdown was called Operation Helix, named for the description of the structure of a DNA molecule. HHS (Health and Human Services) said the cases constitute one of the largest frauds in the history of Medicare, which was implemented in 1966 to provide health coverage to Americans 65 and older. The probe, which began last year, ensnared telemarketing firms, patient recruiters, physicians and medical testing laboratories that preyed on seniors. Nine physicians associated with dozens of genetic testing laboratories were among those charged. The defendants live in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas and South Carolina. The probe was conducted by the federal prosecutors working with the FBI and the law enforcement arm of the Health and Human Services Department, its Office of Inspector General.

What are examples of genetic testing fraud?

♦ A company offering you "free" testing without a treating physician's order and then billing Medicare. These tests go by many names and claim to test for many things. Here are some examples of ways you may see this advertised:
⇒ Cancer screening / test
⇒ DNA screening / test
⇒ Hereditary cancer screening / test
⇒ Dementia screening / test
⇒ Parkinson's screening / test
⇒ Pharmacogenomics – medication metabolization
♦ A company providing a test or screening that you never requested or that you do not need
♦ A company billing Medicare for screening services that are not covered by Medicare or for screenings that do not apply to you
♦ A company requesting your Medicare number at a community event, a local fair, a farmer's market, a parking lot, and or any other event

What happens if Medicare denies the genetic test claims?
You could be responsible for the entire cost of the test! The average is $9,000-$11,000.

What can you do to stop genetic testing fraud?
♦ Be sure your doctor has assessed your condition. Although Medicare covers many genetic tests for diagnostic use, it only covers one preventative genetic test to screen for cancer.
♦ Do not give out your personal information or accept screening services from someone at a community event, a local fair, a farmer's market, a parking lot, and or any other event.
♦ Always read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB). The words "gene analysis," "molecular pathology," or "laboratory" may indicate questionable genetic testing has occurred.
♦ If you received a cheek swab or a screening that was not medically necessary, report your concerns about billing errors or possible fraud and abuse to your local SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol).

To learn about reporting potential Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse go to https://www.smpresource.org/Content/You-Can-Help/Report-Fraud.aspx

Everyone—Protect Yourself From Medical Billing Scams!

Even if you are not of Medicare age, you can still be the target of many of these same medical scams. Always follow your own doctor's instructions and only get medical tests that he or she recommends. Before getting any medical test, ask your doctor to explain why it is necessary and how it will help you. Then, prior to having the test done, contact your insurance company to make sure the test is covered under your plan and that the facility you are referred to is "in network" for you. (The only exception to doing this is in a medical emergency, when it is not a good idea to wait.) After you receive any medical bill, read it carefully and if there is something you do not understand or if it looks like an error, contact the facility to question it. Let your insurance company know if there is an error as well. Always Stay Alert, Aware, and Informed!